



Arizona Department of Education

School Effectiveness Division - School Improvement Unit

School Improvement Newsletter

Educators working together to make a difference

Tom Horne

Superintendent of Public Instruction

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"Wherever I went in Arizona, I would hear what an excellent job the Solutions Teams and ASSIST Coaches were doing with schools. This was reinforcement of the success of the department's overall philosophical change from being one of enforcement, to being primarily service-oriented, to help the schools improve their academic performance." --Superintendent Tom Horne, State of Education 2005 Speech

Click It Resources

Arizona Department of Education

www.ade.az.gov/

ADE Calendar of Events

www.ade.az.gov/online/registration/calendar/RenderCalendar.asp

AIMS High School Sample Test

www.ade.az.gov/standards/HSSampleTestFinal.pdf

AIMS Blueprints

www.ade.az.gov/standards/aims/blueprints/default.asp

AIMS Student Guides

www.ade.az.gov/standards/aims/2004Guides/Default.asp

AIMS Sample Tests

www.ade.az.gov/standards/aims/SampleTests/Default.asp

AIMS Released Items

www.ade.az.gov/standards/aims/ReleasedItems/Default.asp

AZ Standards/Terra Nova

www.ctb.com/ncmedia/2826/AZ_Standards_match_to_TerraNova.pdf

AZ Math Standards/Terra Nova

www.ctb.com/ncmedia/2540/MHPD_to_AZ_Standards.pdf

CTB Writing Roadmap/AZ Standards

www.ctb.com/ncmedia/2525/CTB_rubrics_vs_AZ_rubrics.pdf

Best Practices

<http://www.ade.state.az.us/schooleffectiveness/assist/>

Welcome to our First Edition

The School Effectiveness Division-School Improvement Section here at the Arizona Department of Education is proud to bring you this first edition of our School Improvement Newsletter. This newsletter is designed with you in mind. On a bi-monthly basis we will provide you with important dates, data, and resources to assist your school improvement efforts. We

will pass on timely tips and information which we hope will benefit and support you and your school in your school improvement efforts.

We realize you are busy and time is at a premium. With that in mind, we will work hard to ensure this is a quick read and filled with resources which will make your job easier.

Lessons Learned from 2003-2004 What worked in School Improvement

Over the course of the past school year ASSIST Coaches had the opportunity to work with a wide-variety of schools, sharing with and learning from colleagues in the field who are immersed in challenging and rewarding school improvement efforts. Your colleagues have shared a number of helpful tips on how they managed to move the school improvement process forward on their campuses.

Here are a few of their ideas, perspectives, and insights:

- Above all else keep it simple—target 3 to 5 goals which will have the greatest impact on teaching and learning and serving the needs of your students.
- Ensure that the School Improvement Plan is a living document in your school, not merely words on paper placed on a shelf.
- Develop teacher-leaders. The principal cannot do this alone. Success is incumbent upon leadership emerging from multiple sources in the school.
- Create an atmosphere of team, trust, and openness to the change process.
- Change is messy and therefore difficulties and frustration are inherent.

Contact: William Perkins, wperkin@ade.az.gov, (602) 364-2166
School Effectiveness Division, 1535 West Jefferson, Bin #10, Phoenix, AZ 85007

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ASSIST Coach 101

Just what the heck is an ASSIST Coach and what do they do?

The ASSIST in ASSIST Coach is short for Arizona School Site Improvement Support Team (ASSIST).

The ASSIST Coach model was developed as a means of supporting schools engaged in the school improvement process by:

- Promoting effective planning that incorporates the Solutions Team Statement of Findings with the Arizona School Improvement Plan (ASIP).
- Assisting in the coordination of educational resources.
- Documenting the progress and implementation of the ASIP and Solutions Team Statement of Findings recommendations for improving student achievement.

ASSIST Coaches serve as an extension of Solutions Teams. ASSIST Coaches begin their work with schools upon the completion of the Solutions Team Visit and the issuance of the Solutions Team Statement of Findings. Coach's work with the school to promote the development of plans (or revisions to the ASIP) designed to address the specific developmental needs and priorities identified by the Solutions Team. Coaches assist the school's improvement/leadership team in coordinating internal and external resources and document the school's progress in its implementation of the ASIP and Solutions Team Statement of Findings.

Need Help? Let us know how.

Have a question? Just let us know and we will pose your question/dilemma to a network of colleagues throughout the state. Simply provide us with your question and/or dilemma and we will post it here for your fellow educators to see. If you provide us with an email link help will be on the way even sooner.

Just as students in class are relieved when someone is brave enough to ask a question, we are confident many of your colleagues will be thankful someone has asked the question.

So please, fire up the email and let us know what you are having difficulty with.

Is it:

Parent involvement? Peer Mediation?

Attendance issues? Working with data?

Where to find data? Student behavior?

How to work effectively with ELL Students?

Forward to: wperkin@ade.az.gov

Teacher Skills to Support English Language Learners

Today the fastest growing student group (K-12) is made up of students from non-English speaking backgrounds. It is no secret that English Language Learners struggle in school. They have higher dropout rates and demonstrate significant achievement gaps on a variety of assessments.

Short and Echevarria (Education Leadership, Dec. 04/Jan. 05) point out that ELLs are not all the same. They come from diverse backgrounds, languages, and education profiles.

High quality instruction from a highly qualified teacher makes a significant difference for all learners especially ELLs.

Promoting Academic Literacy for ELLs

Short and Echevarria point to the following strategies which have proven helpful:

- Identify the language demands of the content course.
- Plan language objectives for all lessons and make them explicit to

students.

- Emphasize academic vocabulary development.
- Promote oral interaction and extended academic talk.
- Review vocabulary and content concepts.
- Give students feedback on language use in class.

"Improving ELLs academic performance requires implementing high-quality, consistent sheltered instruction steered by research."

"...with appropriate training, teachers can help English Language Learners master academic content and develop academic literacy skills that lead to school success."

Short, D. & Echevarria, J., (2004). Teacher Skills to Support English Language Learners, Educational Leadership, Dec. 04/Jan. 05, p.8-13.

Creating an Excel Chart to Compare Data Over Multiple Years

In Excel enter the following data:

Step 1

Enter data in the columns below:

A1: Math Skills, B1: 98-99,
C1: 99-00, D1: 00-01

A2: FFB, A3: Approaches,
A4: Meets, A5: Exceeds

B2: 35, C2: 25, D2: 15
B3: 40, C3: 35, D3: 30
B4: 15, C4: 20, D4: 25
B5: 10, C5: 20, D5: 30

Step 2

Left click the mouse to highlight the data.
Select the chart wizard icon in the toolbar.

Step 3

Select the 3-D Column Chart. Press next.

Step 4

Select the row button in the *Series in field*.

Step 5

Enter chart title information in the Chart Title box (i.e. Math Skills 98-99 to 00-01) and/or any other desired style changes. Press next.

Step 6

Select the location you would like to save the chart to and press Finish. Your chart will appear.

Step 7

Go to File, *Save As* and give chart a Save As name (i.e. Math Skills 98-99 to 00-01)